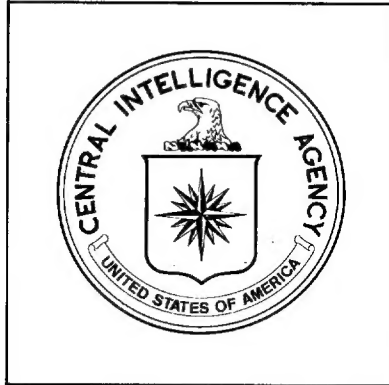


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STAFF NOTES:

Soviet Union Eastern Europe

State Department review completed

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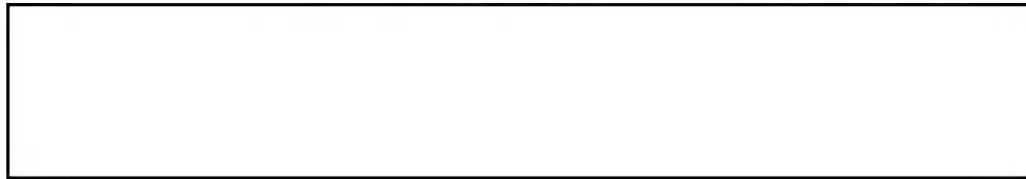


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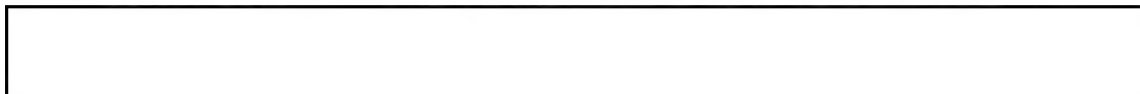


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Soviet Spokesmen Again Endorse Detente

Several recent statements by influential Soviet spokesmen are among the strongest endorsements of US-Soviet detente since the November summit.

President Podgorny, in an article appearing in *Izvestia* on February 12, said that the USSR wants to improve still further its relations with the US and other Western nations. He stated that Moscow is willing to take practical new steps to advance military detente, as well as economic and political cooperation.

On February 11, N. V. Mostovets, a key Central Committee official who deals with US-Soviet relations, spoke privately to an embassy officer in highly optimistic terms. He said the Soviet people were virtually unanimous in supporting better relations with the US and emphasized the urgent need to build on an already good beginning.

Mostovets, fresh from a trip to the US, professed to be encouraged by the vast improvement in US public attitudes toward the USSR since his visit in 1963. He noted that congressional action on "discriminatory" trade legislation had provoked widespread criticism in the US as well as abroad, and foresaw that as a consequence Congress would eventually, in some unspecified fashion, amend the trade act.

Mostovets predictably stressed that Brezhnev's foreign policies had been collectively formulated at the 24th Party Congress and continued to enjoy the support of all the top leadership. He described Brezhnev's recent absence from public view as a "necessary rest," and predicted that Brezhnev would head the Soviet delegation to a very successful summit this summer.

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Mostovets said the avoidance of war is the main task of our time, a theme which has appeared with regularity in recent Soviet commentary on detente. Amid recent bilateral friction over trade and emigration policy and persistent mutual suspicions regarding motives in the Middle East, Soviet commentators have increasingly cited efforts at strategic arms limitation as the mainstay of detente.

Two major articles on SALT in this month's journals of the USA Institute and the Institute for World Economy and International Relations make the same point. The authors, Trofimenko and Milsteyn--leading strategic analysts in the USA Institute, heap praise on the Vladivostok accords and are optimistic about the prospects for SALT II. The two men credit the growing strength of the socialist states with forcing the US to negotiate with the Soviets on the basis of equality, but both anticipate progress in other areas of US-Soviet relations as a result of success in arms limitation.

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Leading Artist-Activist To Emigrate

Moscow's circle of unconventional artists is about to lose through emigration one of its most colorful, albeit not unqualifiedly admired, activists. Aleksandr Glezer, a Jew prominent in organizing and supporting the dissident artists' efforts to chisel out a place for themselves in the official Soviet art world, has finally received permission to emigrate to Israel and plans to leave the USSR on February 16.

Glezer's application for emigration is long standing, but lately he has made no secret of his confidence that by sufficiently irritating the authorities they would want to get rid of him by granting it. Meanwhile, he has been buying up unconventional art at low prices, using an unspecified "channel" to ship it out of the country, and saying that he intends to establish a Soviet modern art museum in London. None of this has endeared him to his colleagues, who came to feel that he was using them for his own purposes [redacted]

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Glezer has no intention, of course, of going to Israel nor, it now appears, of settling in London. He told the US embassy on Wednesday that once he leaves the country he will apply for entry to the US because he feels New York will be more "receptive" than London to the establishment of a gallery of modern Soviet art. If Glezer succeeds, his gallery should be well-stocked from the start. He said that he has been given permission to take 80 paintings with him, and that he had previously sent almost 600 works out of the USSR by various means.

Glezer's departure and subsequent activities abroad could affect the morale of his Moscow colleagues, who are once again seeking to organize an

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officially sanctioned exhibit of their work [redacted]
[redacted] This turn of events may fuel
their suspicions that the regime is not really un-
happy with Glezer's activities, which can again be
used to "prove" that status-seeking and monetary
gain play a greater role in the activities of diss-
ident artists than does selfless devotion to the
cause of artistic freedom.

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Czechoslovakia and Romania Are Tightening
Their Foreign Trade Systems

Czechoslovakia and Romania are further tightening their foreign trade systems in an attempt to stem the tide of rising hard currency deficits by increasing control over imports from the West.

Last month Prague introduced a customs tariff to improve control over the semi-autonomous foreign trade organizations. The number of enterprises with authority to conduct foreign trade has been reduced, and further cuts are probably in store.

Prague has also ordered that hard currency loaned to enterprises for the import of Western machinery must be repaid in hard currency. This would direct Czechoslovakia's imports toward industries with the greatest hard currency export potential. The highest tariff rates and apparently the most stringent loan policies will be imposed on imports from West Germany. Prague believes that Bonn already has too much commercial influence in Czechoslovakia and that foreign trade officials fall for the West German sales pitch without shopping around.

In Romania, centralization of foreign trade has been the pattern for about 18 months. Enterprises engaged in foreign trade have gradually been subjected to stricter regulations, and foreign trade organizations have been reduced from about 100 to 45. A customs tariff was implemented in January 1974. Romanian officials are now trying to persuade GATT members--including the US--that the tariff will not restrict imports, but will simply give Bucharest more control over foreign trade enterprises.

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Despite these changes, both countries will probably run large deficits again this year. Czechoslovakia is a large importer of raw materials, and Romania's appetite for Western technology is unabated.

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Hungarian Party Congress

Several changes in the top leadership will be made at the Hungarian party Congress to be held March 17-22, according to a well-placed Hungarian journalist, but party leader Kadar definitely will stay on.

Ferenc Varnai, a political editor of the party daily, told a US diplomat that the personnel changes have already been decided, but he did not divulge any names. There has been much speculation that Politburo members Gyorgy Aczel, Rezso Nyers, and Lajos Feher will be removed from the leadership. All three are advocates of Kadar's reforms and suffered setbacks in the retrenchment at the party plenum last March.

Varnai, whose politics appear to be on the conservative side of the Hungarian spectrum, said the congress will not decree any radical policy shifts, but will continue some of the retrenchment that has been under way for some time. He anticipated increases in the ideological content of media and cultural activity and strengthening of the central economic mechanism to "rectify" some of the "distortions and abuses" of decentralization under the economic reform. He said that industrial workers will receive even more preferential economic treatment so as to bring their incomes more in line with those of farmers and the small private sector, which have done well under the economic reform.

Kadar's position seems firm, and speculation about his "retirement" has vanished since his triumphant visit to the USSR last fall. At the same time, the Hungarian leader appears intent on satisfying certain critics who think that economic and cultural liberalism has gone too far. It seems

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doubtful, however, that Kadar wants--or will allow--a prolonged period of retrenchment that would mean a qualitative shift from the liberal policies that have marked his regime.

Possible popular reaction to policy or personnel changes is a restraining factor that can be used to argue for a go-slow policy. The regime is clearly aware of public attitudes, and is going to great lengths to reassure the populace. A recent commentary in the party daily tried to convince readers that increased ideological struggle is an "inevitable" part of detente, but that this does not mean an end to cooperation among all segments of society (the "national alliance" policy). In practice this has resulted in a gentle-handed treatment of intellectuals, wide-spread use of non-party technocrats, and favorable treatment for agriculture.

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New Post for Anatoliy Gromyko

Anatoliy Gromyko, 42-year-old son of the Soviet foreign minister, has arrived in East Berlin, where he will serve as one of two deputies to Ambassador Mikhail Yefremov. A long-time specialist in US affairs, Gromyko had been the junior deputy chief of mission in Washington for little more than a year when he was reassigned in November 1974.

In East Berlin, as in Washington, it appears that a special position at the embassy was created for the younger Gromyko. During a reception in West Berlin last month, Ivan Romanovskiy, a first secretary at Gromyko's new post, weakly explained to a US official that the embassy had always had two minister counselor slots, but only the senior one had previously been filled. In a bantering tone, Romanovskiy remarked that the arrival of such a well-qualified US expert demonstrated the importance that the Soviet Union attaches to its relations with the United States in Berlin. When asked whether Gromyko would be concerned with West Berlin in his new assignment, however, Romanovskiy implied that he would not.

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Belgrade Heats Up Anti-Bulgarian Propaganda

Belgrade has escalated its month-old press campaign against Bulgarian treatment of the Macedonian question, and allegations that Sofia has designs on Yugoslav territory are beginning to appear.

Belgrade's authoritative *Borba* recently denounced a recent speech by the daughter of Bulgarian party boss Zhivkov, which, *Borba* claimed, called the people of Bulgarian Macedonia "an inseparable part of the Bulgarian people." Regional dailies in Macedonia, Slovenia, and Croatia quickly weighed in with more elaborate versions, including the allegation that Sofia is whipping up irredentist feeling in Bulgaria.

Milika Sundic, Radio Zagreb's well-informed commentator, last week speculated that the Soviets might be pushing "increased anti-Yugoslav propaganda" in Bulgaria to press Belgrade on other issues. Sundic's assertion may be intended to draw the Soviets into the dispute. Belgrade has long wanted Moscow to nudge Sofia into making concessions on the Macedonian minority question.

The Bulgarians have been surprisingly quiet about the polemic from Belgrade. The Bulgarian party daily did cover the Zhivkova speech on February 1 but there has been no campaign on the issue. With Yugoslav charges escalating at their current rate, however, Sofia will be hard pressed to keep its own nationalists in check much longer.

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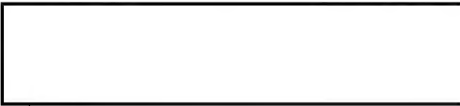
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